

EBT Coordinator Update



FROM PAPER TO PLASTIC

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Contact the DWS CARES Call Center

This is a reminder that you should contact the DWS CARES Call Center to report EBT problems or ask questions about EBT policies and procedures. Email contacts are preferred (carpolcc@dwd.state.wi.us). DWS expects local agencies to attempt to resolve questions at the local level, utilizing staff, management and training resources, before contacting the Call Center. The EBT coordinator, a designated backup, or the CARES coordinator should be the only persons contacting the Call Center. Continue to contact Tim Burnett to order temporary QUEST cards.

Citicorp Customer Service Phone Line Outage

There was a phone line outage into one of the Citicorp call centers on Tuesday, March 26, 2002. Some callers opting out to a representative got a message to call back later as all lines were busy. The problem started at approximately 9:30 a.m. and was corrected at 12:31 p.m. Thanks to the local agencies who reported the problem to the DWS CARES Call Center.

Use of EBT Manual Vouchers for Food Stamp Purchases

FNS regulations require that the EBT system provides for back-up purchase procedures when the system is unavailable. However, FNS regulations do not require retailers to utilize these back-up procedures. In order to ensure that a client has sufficient funds in the account to cover the amount of a manual voucher purchase, the retailer must contact the Citicorp retailer helpline to obtain a manual voucher authorization number. If a retailer is unable or unwilling to make this call before the client leaves the store with the food and the client's account does not have a sufficient balance to cover the purchase when the retailer does call, the retailer is liable for the insufficient funds. Because some stores may be unable to contact the Citicorp retailer helpline while the client is in the checkout lane, FNS regulations do not require retailers to perform manual voucher purchases.

Redemption of Food Stamp Coupons

With the implementation of EBT, some banks may no longer accept food stamp coupons. Retailers should contact the Madison USDA/FNS field office number listed on the EBT Troubleshooting Contact List if they can't get the bank to take food stamp coupons. FNS will provide information on submitting food stamp coupons to FNS for reimbursement.

If you receive a complaint that a FNS authorized retailer does not accept food stamp coupons, contact the USDA/FNS field office. Retailers must continue to accept food stamp coupons.

EBT Troubleshooting Contact List Update

The current Madison USDA/FNS field office phone number is (608) 441-5404. The name of the Officer in Charge has also been updated. A link to the updated EBT Troubleshooting Contact List is included under the Local Agency section of the [Wisconsin Quest Card](#) page.

Interoperability

Interoperability is the capability to use an EBT card in any State to redeem food stamp benefits. Current policy in Food Stamp Handbook Chapter 24.02.16.01 specifies that households that move to a QUEST state should be able to spend benefits remaining on the Wisconsin QUEST card there. Do not convert their EBT benefits to coupons.

FNS has provided us with a list of other states that have signed interoperability agreements. We expect to issue a list of the States that are interoperable in the next Food Stamp Handbook release. It is getting increasingly harder for recipients to redeem coupons in states that have converted to EBT. The number of coupon conversions should decrease as we expand the list of interoperable states.

Language Interpreter Services

As of 3/1/02, DWD contracted with a new vendor for language interpreter services. The new vendor is Certified Languages International. When a client calls 1-877-415-5164 and need an interpreter, the Citicorp customer services representative will call the new vendor for this service. EBT Coordinator Update #7 dated August 27, 2000 described language lines services that were provided by AT&T.

Emergency Card Replacement

This is a reminder to review card issuance information and card usage on the CEFS system to determine if an emergency exists before you issue a temporary QUEST card. (FS Handbook Appendix Chapter 24.02.08.02.01) If a client used the QUEST card yesterday and wants an emergency replacement card today, would you consider this an emergency? If the balance in the account is less than \$5, would you consider this an emergency? Limit card replacement to documented emergencies as defined by a uniform policy established by each local agency.

Another reason to check the CEFS system is to verify that the cardholder and the address are correct. Do NOT issue a temporary QUEST card to a client with prohibited status. The card will not work. If you make an address change or a cardholder change today, wait until tomorrow to issue a replacement QUEST card. If you don't want the client to come back into the office the next day, you can PIN the temporary QUEST card today and give it to the client. Attach the card to the account via the CEFS Card Replacement screen the next day. Tell the client when the card can be used at the store.